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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9037  
INFO RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 6488  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6342  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6693  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0714  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6343  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AUG CARACAS 1444  
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 3493  
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 2326

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 001689

SIPDIS

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

STATE FOR WHA/BSC  
EEB/TPP/ABT FOR PAUL SAXTON  
PASS USTR FOR KATHERINE DUCKWORTH AND MARY SULLIVAN  
TREASURY FOR ROSELLEN ALBANO  
USDOC FOR 4322/ITA/MAC/OLAC/PEACHER

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [TBIO](#) [AR](#)  
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: STARTING AN IMPORT SAFETY DIALOGUE

REF: (A) STATE 114788, (B) BUENOS AIRES 1644, (C) BUENOS AIRES 1648

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: GoA officials confirmed, in response to Ref A questions, that import safety issues are a concern, but to date they have taken only limited measures to increase safety inspections. The GoA announced on August 17, 2007 new measures to restrict imports from 13 Asian countries (Ref B). While those announcements cited safety concerns as one criterion for increased restrictions, measures implemented to date appear primarily designed to protect local industry from import competition (Ref C), and no new regulations relating to product safety have been issued. Information on how Argentina regulates safety issues is detailed in paragraphs 5 to 13. END SUMMARY

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Contact with GOA Officials  
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12. (SBU) Argentine agriculture, livestock, and food safety inspection service (SENASA) officials Mr. Oscar Astibia, Coordinator for International Relations and Dr. Carlos Ameri, National Director for Agricultural Food Safety met with Ag Counselor David Mergen and Agricultural Specialist Francisco Pirovano August 21 to discuss Argentine consumer product safety concerns regarding agricultural and food products and how the U.S. and Argentina can cooperate on safety issues. The Agricultural Office in the Embassy is in regular contact with SENASA regarding safety requirements for Argentine food exports to the U.S. Mr. Astibia stated that SENASA has not received any orders from the GoA to change any processes or requirements for food imports due to the recent problems of food safety encountered with products from China in other countries. Mr. Astibia explained that SENASA's Resolution 816 is the relevant Argentine regulation that regulates meat and livestock products under SENASA's jurisdiction. Resolution 816 states that processing plant inspections can be required, as determined by SENASA, before granting an import permit for a product manufactured in such plant.

13. (SBU) Patricia Andreo, Director of Import Authorization at the National Food Institute (INAL) told an Embassy official on Aug. 22

that there has been increased awareness and concern over tainted products (mainly ceramic products) from China which has resulted in more thorough inspections of imported products. They are now doing 100 percent testing for contaminants of ceramic products from China.

On August 1, 2007, INAL began to randomly sample food shipments from all destinations to check that the products meet composition standards set out in the product registration. They are also checking for bacteria and other requirements. In particular, they are more closely inspecting products from China, with special attention to those ingredients/raw materials that will be used to manufacture food in Argentina. INAL has also been looking more closely at packaging.

¶4. (SBU) Maria Rivera from the Under Secretariat of Domestic Commerce, Secretariat of Industry and Commerce spoke to Agricultural Specialist Francisco Pirovano on August 22 regarding additional measures taken in the wake of the recent increase in product safety concerns. She said that her agency has not increased measures or restrictions and that as long as a product has the necessary certification from a Secretariat approved certifying agency, the product is allowed entry into the country.

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Import Regulatory Entities for Food Products  
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¶5. (U) There are three official entities that regulate food safety standards, packaging, and transportation of food products in Argentina:

¶A. The National Service of Agricultural Food Health and Quality (Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria - SENASA) handles fresh, chilled, or frozen products and by-products of

animal, plant and seafood origin. It also handles canned products containing over 60 percent animal origin and food preparations containing over 80 percent animal origin.

¶B. The National Food Institute (Instituto Nacional de Alimentos - INAL), a division of ANMAT (see below) regulates processed food products which are prepared for direct human consumption, health supplements, and both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, with the exception of wine.

¶C. The National Wine Institute (Instituto Nacional de Vitivinicultura - INV) exercises control over wine and wine products during their production, manufacturing, and marketing.

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Regulatory Agencies for Non-Food Products  
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¶6. (U) Argentina's regulatory equivalent of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (Administracion Nacional de Medicamentos, Alimentos y Tecnologia Medica - ANMAT), within the Ministry of Health, regulates and prohibits imports of certain toxic substances contained in products such as pharmaceutical products and cosmetics.

¶7. (U) The Under Secretariat of Domestic Commerce, part of Argentina's Secretariat of Industry and Commerce, controls imports of toys and electric products. For those products to enter the country, they must be certified by an Argentine certification company approved by the Secretariat.

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Regulations and Controls for Food Products  
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¶8. (U) SENASA's resolution 256/03 establishes the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for products that are traded in the country. The mechanism to set them is as follows: a chemical company that applies for a pesticide to be released in the Argentine market must carry out a two-year study in three different agro-ecological areas of Argentina. The sampling method to be used in these cases is the one that is approved by FAO. Argentina uses the Tolerated Daily Intake (Ingesta Diaria Admisible - in Spanish) suggested by the Codex Alimentarius for the Latin American Region 14 as a reference.

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Products Imported Through SENASA  
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¶9. (U) "Fresh, Chilled, or Frozen Products and By-products of Animal and Seafood Origin" are covered by SENASA Resolution No. 816/02. An import permit is required to import products and by-products of animal origin into Argentina. The permit is obtained from SENASA and should be requested by an importer who has already been registered at SENASA and who has registered the facility intending to export to Argentina.

¶10. (U) Products of Plant Origin: A Phytosanitary Certificate issued by officials in the exporting countries is required for all plant products entering into Argentina. Upon arrival in Argentina, SENASA holds the product at the port of entry for inspection and to verify that it meets all the requirements stated in phytosanitary certificate. SENASA then issues an import certificate for Customs to release the product.

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Products Imported Through INAL  
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¶11. (U) Processed Foods, and Alcoholic and Non-alcoholic Beverages, Except Wine: Product and importer registration is required prior to importing a product into Argentina. The product must be registered by an importer who has already completed the registration process at INAL. Registrations are normally ready in less than thirty (30) days.

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Products Imported Through INV (Wine)  
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¶12. (U) INV requires the following for wine imports: The importer must be registered with the INV. The imported product must come accompanied by a certificate issued by the appropriate official authority of the country of origin, stating its analytical specifications. The product must comply with the composition standards required by the INV for similar locally manufactured products.

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Prohibited Product Imports  
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¶13. (U) The GOA has prohibited the import of the following products:

- Used automobiles (with some exceptions, Decree 110/1999);  
Used motorcycles and velocipedes (Resolution 790/1992, Ministry of Economy);
- Used equipment and its parts, as indicated by Decree 690/2002, Appendix XIV and its modifications (Resolution 89/2003 ME, article 70);
- Used clothing and accessories (MERCOSUR Tariff Codes 6309.00.10 & 6309.00.90) until June 30, 2010. (Resolution ME 367/2005);
- All types of dangerous residues (Law 24051);  
Certain dangerous substances (Resolutions 750/2000, 845/2000, 182/1999, etc.);
- Telephone terminals that operate in a band between 1880 Mghz-1900 Mghz (Resolution SC 1994/1999);
- Toys considered dangerous for children. This is a temporary measure valid for twenty-four months starting September 22, 2005 (Resolution MSA 243/2006);
- Used and recapped tires (MERCOSUR Tariff Codes 4012.10.00 & 4012.20.00, Law 25,626 8/8/2003);
- Used equipment, instruments, parts and transportation material (Resolution MEOSP 909/94, article 40, and modifications). Resolution

MP 37/2003 exempted donations of used goods over 5 years old made to governmental institutions and registered religious entities;

- Raw cotton (not carded or combed, harsh or rough) as per Res. SENASA 208/03

WAYNE